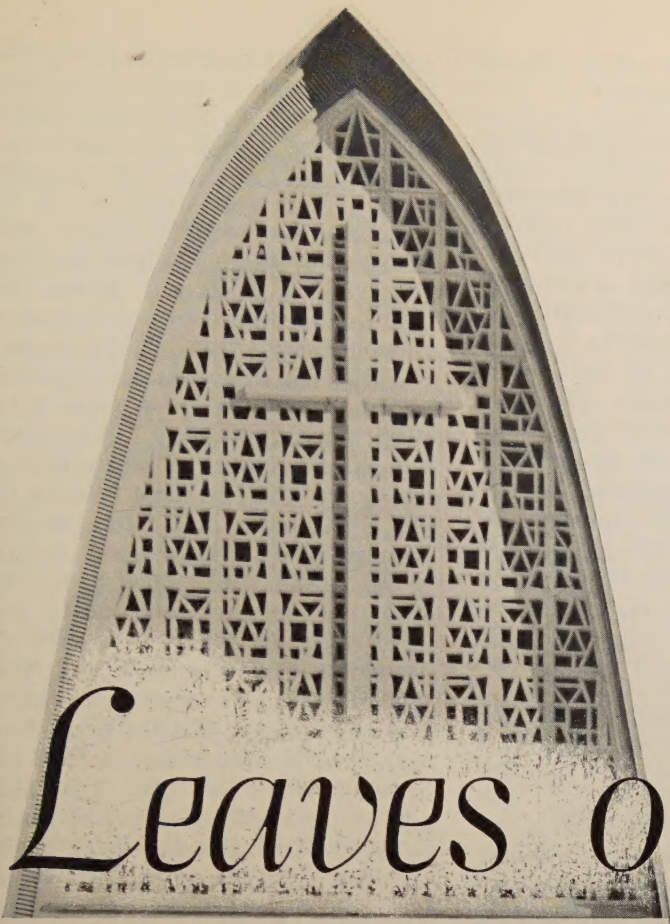


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# Leaves of Healing

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## *They That Wait Upon The Lord*

Carl Q. Lee

I recall an expression that came out of a New York play some time ago, "Stop the world, I want to get off!" There was probably some good reason that prompted this particular exclamation, and I imagine we have all at sometime felt that the world had become overbearing; that the vicissitudes and pain and suffering of these present times were more than one could bear and we would perhaps like to

say, "stop the world, I want to get off!"

We are living in a world filled with sin, a world that is plunging headlong toward the abyss. These are not necessarily the words of some overwrought prophet, they are the considerations of objective observers who say that this is the state that the world finds itself in today.

### **The Enslavement of a Structured, Scheduled Society**

We live in a complex, highly sophisticated social structure that is harassed by schedules; we are enslaved by clocks. A man who came from a slower moving society once made the comment that he was amazed to discover that Americans had one common gesture: constantly looking at their wrist-watches. They were driven to know what time it was, and where they must be the next minute. Yes, we are caught in a trap of schedules, we are caught in the trap of obeying our timepieces.

There are other things that are equally harassing in the social and economic structure in which we live. We are caught in the trap of competition. Competition is not a bad thing. It is the key to our economic structure. But there are aspects of the competitive situation which become overdrawn, which

*The Night Is Far Spent, The Day Is At Hand:*

*Let Us Therefore Cast Off The Works Of*

*Darkness, And Let Us Put On The*

*Armour Of Light.*

ROMANS 13:12

CHRISTIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH - 1976 WATCHWORD



become driving forces that compel those caught in its trap to do things they should not do. They walk contrary to all morals and ethics, let alone Christian morals and ethics, to compete in the world in which they find themselves. Their competitive instinct impels them to destroy the competitor, and the result is a kind of viciousness that is unhealthy and betokens eventual destruction.

There are those who are caught in the trap of success. This concept has various cutting edges. How do you measure one's "success"? More often than not it is measured in terms of the size of one's estate, the amount of money one has in the bank or is reported to have, the amount of real estate or material goods one claims to possess.

It is a strange complexity of our social structure that one who has achieved "success" in this way, regardless almost of other factors, attains a certain lofty status in the social and economic structure of our day. And within his own mind and heart, unless he is very careful, he begins to think of himself as some kind of oracle in terms of the pronouncements he makes.

Then there is the reverse side of the coin. There is the man who strives for material success but does not attain it. He drives himself, forgets his family, is ridden by a sense of failure, and destroys himself because he could not achieve "success."

#### **Terror As A Political Means**

There are other factors prompting us at times to say, "Stop the world, I want to get off!" There is the growth of political factions across the world that have adopted terror as their mode of operation. Their ideas have no bounds in terms of the cruelty they are willing to exercise against their fellowmen. They kidnap public officials, destroy public transportation, plant bombs and use countless other means to create terror, often accompanying them with non-negotiable demands. Thank God we as a people have not been confronted with this kind of thing to any great degree! But large segments of the population of the world have been subjected to this type of harassment. There are factions in this country that say they are going to

obtain their political and economic goals by the use of terror.

We are caught in a highly complex socio-economic political structure that generates certain demands that we meet competition, that we become successes. There are also demands that call upon us to bravely face a turbulent world infiltrated by terrorists who wish to destroy the system of which we are a part. Many times we wonder what can be done about it. We can't say, "stop the world, I want to get off!" Ah, yes, there are some who believe they can resolve the problem by committing suicide. Suicide has become a growing threat to the world and it is startling to realize the increase in suicides among high school and college level students.

However, there is no escape in suicide. What then is the answer? I have just given some very negative considerations concerning the world in which we live. What is the answer? We read in Isaiah chapter 40: *They that wait upon the Lord shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.*

Just what is meant by "waiting upon the Lord"? Sometimes the language of the prophetic writers, the language of Scriptures is baffling to us, and we seek to find its deeper and truer meaning by study and prayer.

#### **How Do We Wait Upon The Lord?**

God has revealed Himself to us in two major ways. He is revealed in His written Word, this book we call the Holy Bible. Its pages contain diverse types of writing by diverse authors coming to us over a long period of time. Here God is revealed to us in the Old Testament in various ways. He never appears in Person in the Old Testament. Sometimes He was manifested in a burning bush on the side of a mountain, or in a still small voice that followed the storm and the earthquake. Sometimes He spoke through the prophets who often stated: *The Word of the Lord came unto me saying . . .*

He has revealed Himself to us in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth. In Him we find God manifested in the flesh. How simple that phrase, but how unbelievably encompassing. Almighty God, the Eternal God, the Maker of the heavens and the

earth and all that in them is, Who put the stars in their order, Who created man, has revealed Himself to us and come to us in the Person of Jesus the Carpenter of Nazareth.

Having come face-to-face with God, what does it mean to "wait upon Him?" It simply means this: that we should do everything through all mediums that God gives us, through every faculty we possess, to come to know Him in the Biblical connotation of that word. We should come to know Him as He has revealed Himself to us in the Old Testament, as He has revealed Himself to us in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth. And as we do we will find that we are prompted to wait upon God in other ways. We are moved to communicate with God through what is commonly called prayer. I believe that the word *communicate* is better because too frequently when we use the word *prayer* we think in terms of asking God for something, "Dear Lord! give me this, give me that, give me the other thing." Prayer is more than requesting certain things of God. Prayer is communicating with Him, waiting upon Him, talking to Him, searching out His Person.

As we pray we learn to meditate. Running through our minds are those things we have picked up from hearing Scripture, and these truths resolve within our hearts and minds and reveal to us the Lord God. They speak to us of His Person; they speak to us of what He wants of us. And so we wait upon the Lord.

#### **What Are The Results of Waiting Upon The Lord**

What does this bring to us? We can read the Old Testament and get caught up in the bustle and flurry of the stories of battle, or the force and power of the judgments of God that swept across wicked nations and consumed wicked men. But these are not the final revelations of God in the Old Testament. How often we heard quoted the passage in Deuteronomy: *The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.* Isaiah the prophet's words in Isaiah 40:28-31. In another place he said, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee* (Isaiah 26:3). How seriously have we read the psalms, *Blessed is the man that*



walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord: and in His law both he meditate day and night (Psalm 1:1,2)? Have we considered what David said in the 23rd Psalm? *The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*

We would continue through the psalms — the 34th, 91st, 103rd, these are just a few so familiar to us. The 130th psalm poses the question, *If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?* Not one of us could stand under those conditions. *But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest not be feared.* This is the God revealed to us in the Old Testament, but how sharply it comes into focus as we encounter Jesus of Nazareth. We listen to His words in the Sermon on the Mount, and here we find the ethic of perfect love being presented. God knows that as we read the words of the Sermon on the Mount, and examine our hearts in self-judgment, we will find that it is far beyond our capacity to live according to that ethic of perfect love.

He has spoken to us in other areas. The disciples were confronted with terror beyond their ability to deal with. They were going to be brought face-to-face with the power of the religious, social and political forces of their day, forces that would drive them to the edge of destruction. Yet Jesus knowing full well what would come to pass said, *Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.* (John 14:1-3).

As we wait upon God, as we endeavor to find Him in the pages of the Old Testament, and as we find

Him in Jesus of Nazareth there comes suddenly to us this overwhelming injunction, *Let not your heart be troubled!*

The Apostle Paul encountered trouble: harassment, persecution, and oppression. He was stoned, given stripes and thrown into prison; he endured the terror of the elements. It was out of this background that he wrote these words of comfort, *All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose* (Romans 8:28). *Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you* (I Thess. 5:17,18). *Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart . . .* (Psalm 27:14). So these injunctions come ringing down to us clear and sound and sure.

#### **Thru Him We Shall Run and Not Be Weary Neither Be Afraid**

We live in a world in which we are caught in traps that enslave us — our watches, the schedules we are driven by, the force of competition fair and otherwise, the terror of political activists. Caught in such traps we are inclined to forget our God and to forget our families, and we drive on to our own possible destruction. This is not the will of God. The will of God is vouchsafed to us in these words: *Hast thou not known? has thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? . . . But they that wait upon*

*the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint* (Isaiah 40:28 & 31).

Can you walk with the assurance that comes to us from the pen and voice of Paul? *All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose?* Can you listen to the voice of Jesus on the night on which He was betrayed and said, *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me?* And as we wait upon the Lord let us wait in terms of searching Him out in the Scriptures, coming to know Him through Jesus of Nazareth.

As we communicate with God through prayer, as we meditate even through the night watches, there will come to us that dynamic assurance that came to the prophet Isaiah when he said, *They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.* Then indeed we can say, "The Eternal God is my refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms." "The Lord indeed is my Shepherd." These and other assurances from His Word become realities that bring to every heart that so searches and so seeks, that peace of God that passeth all understanding.

Beloved, I urge you as I speak to your hearts and to my own, let us wait upon the Lord, let us know what it means to run and not be weary, to walk and not faint!

## *Attitudes in Action*

Roger W. Ottersen

By definition we can say that attitude is the exhibition of internal feelings. I am convinced that our attitudes cause us to act and react the way we do to the various situations of life. Obviously, our attitudes affect our actions. It is not consistent to say that a person's attitude is right if they continually do wrong. Occasionally a circumstance will arise when an individual is found doing things that are bad, and someone, rationalizing, will say, "I know that he or she does this, or does that but their heart is

right." Our attitude is shown by our actions. What we believe affects the way we live. Perhaps this is what the writer of Proverbs meant when he said: *For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.*

We could spend much time sharing illustrations from the Word of God about good and bad attitudes, but I will mention only a few. First, there is the bad attitude of prejudice. Certainly Jonah, in the Old Testament, is an outstanding picture of a man with a bad attitude.



He was very much prejudiced against the inhabitants of Ninevah, but God in His love and mercy was concerned for the people of this great city and commissioned Jonah to go to them as His spokesman. Jonah turned his back on God's will, and we are aware of the story that ensues. He left and went a different direction because he was filled with prejudice.

The Bible also presents an example of the attitude of doubt and rejection as manifested by the thief on the cross. As he was dying he turned and looked at Jesus of Nazareth and said, "If Thou art the Son of God save yourself and us." These very words were filled with spite, rejection and doubt — "Save Thyself if Thou art the Christ!"

Perhaps the outstanding illustration of an attitude of greed is found in the gospel account in Luke of the rich farmer who, looking out of his window one day, was suddenly awed by the magnitude of his wealth and possessions. He was concerned because his barns were filled and there was no more room. So he determined to tear down his barns and build bigger. Then, using the expression of his own lips, it was his desire to sit back, and say, *Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry*. God responded with these words: *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?* The response given was simply that this life does not consist in the abundance of things that we possess.

Another example of a bad attitude, an attitude of pride, is recorded in Acts chapter 5. Pride filled the heart of Ananias and Sapphira. They were impressed by the action of people of the church who were selling their possessions and giving them to the church so that all could share equally. They were not required to do so, but they did sell their possessions, and then boasted that they had sold everything and given to the Lord. Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, both were guilty of pride. It seemed that it was their desire to be among those of the congregation who would be lauded and praised for their generosity of spirit. In judgment, both of their lives were taken one following the other.

What might be considered the greatest illustration of a bad attitude is seen in the Old Testament account when the spies were sent to search out the land of Canaan, *And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain: And see the land, what it is, and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strongholds* (Numbers 13:17-19). We move on to verses 27-29 the spies had returned and this is what they said: *And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.*

They brought back some of the fruit of the land, and they said, "It flows with milk and honey, but the people are strong in the land, the cities are walled and are very great." It was their decision that it would not be wise for the children of Israel to enter Canaan. In chapter 13 and verse 30, Caleb, one of the spies, *stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel.*

Perhaps we could say that this was an attitude of lack of faith, of which we have all been guilty. It is not pleasant to be around someone who constantly displays a negative attitude, the person who always looks on the black side. I recollect being with a friend and listening as the weatherman on TV forecasted a sixty percent chance of rain. My friend was murmuring, but I said, "Don't forget there is a forty per-

cent chance that it might not rain." When the weatherman says it will be partly cloudy, that means it will also be partly sunny. Most of us tend to look on the negative side of events far too often.

There is the story of the man who was extremely proud of his hunting dog. It seems this dog was able to do something that no other dog could do. The dog's owner could hardly wait to get out with his friends and show off his dog. So the next time he was out hunting and saw a bird fly overhead, he shot it, and his dog went running out on top of the water to retrieve the bird. No one made a comment. A few minutes later another bird flew over and he shot it. Again the dog ran out on top of the water and picked up the bird. Still no comment from his friends. Yet a third time the same thing happened and the dog went out on the water and ran back with the bird. Still no comment. The man turned to his friends and said, "Say, didn't you notice anything special about my dog?" They thought for a moment and their reply was simply this, "Yes, we notice he can't swim."

I am afraid this is an illustration of many of our lives. We are so concerned about the problems of life, looking on the dark side instead of the bright.

If our attitudes produce our actions, if what we believe causes us to do what we do, then what ought to be the attitudes of a Christian? I believe this is what the apostle Paul was speaking of in the 4th chapter of Phillipians. Paul was writing to his friends in the church at Philippi during a time when the circumstances that were surrounding him were anything but favorable. He was in prison, and he had every right to be discouraged. He could have been murmuring and complaining, but instead, the theme word of the book of Phillipians is *Rejoice! Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice*. Paul could say this because he had learned to have the right attitude in every circumstance. Paul had an attitude of faith.

In the opening verses of the 4th chapter of Phillipians he refers to the brethren at Philippi: *My brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown . . .* Paul was the



kind of man who did not work for material things. He was not trying to become wealthy and accumulate a lot of possessions. That which brought joy to his heart and soul was to see the people of God become mature in faith. *You are my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.* Then he speaks about Euodias and Syntyche, two ladies who had worked in the church at Philippi, who had been co-workers together with him. But something had happened between Euodias and Syntyche. Paul does not disclose what had caused this division in their fellowship in the Lord. He says: *I beseech you Euodias and Syntyche that you be of the same mind in the Lord. And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-laborers, whose names are in the book of Life. Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.*

Paul had peace from God as a result of his faith; he had forbearance for others because of his love for God. In verse 5 he speaks of consideration for others: *Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

It is not easy to be grateful, but we ought to work for an attitude of gratefulness before God. With thanksgiving we ought to let our requests be made known to God, and sometimes the bad circumstances of life are the things which bring us closer to the Lord and enable us to be strong in Him. The motto that Paul presents: "Be anxious for nothing, prayerful in everything, and thankful at all times," ought to be our attitude of heart. And we can claim the promise of verse 7: *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* Beginning at verse 8 he gives an exhortation to higher thinking, to nobler efforts, and finally in verse 9 he said: *The God of peace shall be with you!*

Prior to this he mentions some of the things that ought to be the objects of their concern and heart attitude: Think on the things that are right, that are pure, that are

lovely, that are of good report. Practice these things and the God of peace will be with you.

Paul learned to be content in any circumstance. Paul knew that all things are possible through Christ, and in verse 13 he says, *I can do all things through Christ Who strengtheneth me.* And in verse 19: *My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

If I had to choose between two people for a position of authority, one with an exceptionally good background and training, but a bad attitude; the other with lesser ex-

perience and training, but an attitude that was good, I would choose the latter. I believe you would too. May God help us as Christians to cultivate a good attitude in all circumstances of life!

Our attitudes produce actions. What we believe produces what we do. God help us to have an attitude that is right toward Him, not an attitude of doubt, but of faith and trust in the Living God. *Be anxious for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known unto God.*

## *E Pluribus Unum*

Clark B. Offner

On American coins, we find the words: "Liberty", "In God We Trust", "E Pluribus Unum". In each case, these words may be considered to refer to an ideal or hope, rather than an actuality, but in this bicentennial year, each of them is worthy of consideration and thoughtful scrutiny. If we take an objective look at American society today, can we honestly say that the "inalienable right" of liberty is a reality for all Americans? Can we honestly affirm that it is "in God we trust" rather than in the lucre on which these words are inscribed? Or can we honestly say, in regard to our nation, "E Pluribus Unum" (from many one; one out of, or composed of, many)? Let us consider the meaning behind this Latin phrase which is found on the Great Seal of the United States, having been selected by Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson for the Continental Congress just 200 years ago.

When this motto was originally formulated, the basic idea was probably the union of the 13 distinct Colonies, with their differing historical backgrounds, laws and organizational structures. It was not without considerable agitation, frustration, and confrontation, that these independent-minded Colonists, many of whom had fled to this "new world" to escape the strong, political domination of an inflexible power structure in the "old world", that a compromise was reached which brought into exis-

tence the "United States of America", one (federal) government, *out of and composed of many* states was formed: "E Pluribus Unum".

Over the two centuries since then, however, as peoples of different national backgrounds, skin colors, religious convictions, racial origins, political philosophies, and cultural strains have flooded into this country with high hopes, as though it were indeed the "promised land", as these United States have become, in fact, a kind of "melting pot" of the world, this motto has taken on a still deeper significance. The lofty ideals of the founding fathers sounded noble, but are they realistic? Mottoes, whether to paint on placards carried by striking teachers or to inscribe on coins, are easy to compose, but much more difficult to put into practice. There is no question about the "pluribus" part of the motto. It is very evident that we live in a pluralistic society.

The problem is, is there a genuine "unum" that has come out of this "pluribus"?

Looking back over the past couple of decades, division would probably be more characteristic of our society than unity. Viet Nam, Watergate, Black Power, Women's Liberation, School Busing, Energy Crisis, Prayer in the Schools, Unemployment, Socialized Medicine, are just a few of the expressions that serve to point up the strongly divided feelings of citizens of these "united" States. In consideration of the great variety of cultural, politi-



cal, racial, and religious elements that compose our pluralistic society, it is not unreasonable to seriously ask whether or not the ideal of a united nation, made of of such disparate components, is realistic. Is it possible for us to be united on some basis other than a common threat to our very existence?

It would seem that the sensible way to seek for unity among such a diversified citizenry is to seriously consider once again the roots of our national heritage. On what basis did this nation's founding fathers decide to separate from the "motherland"? The core of the Declaration of Independence is clear, and remains relevant: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness". At least some of the dissent that has been spreading during the past decades is due to the fact that the ideals expressed in this Declaration have not yet been achieved. Equality, under the law, should extend to all citizens alike, and such unalienable *rights* as a meaningful life, personal freedom, and equal opportunities for happiness, should be recognized as belonging to *all* — regardless of ethnic, religious, or economic differences. If preference is regularly given to those of a particular race, sex, religion, political party, or social status, it is in keeping with the spirit of our national tradition that efforts be made to alter or abolish the form of government, or the restrictions of society, that are destructive of these rights of people.

Whether or not the ideal of "E Pluribus Unum" (*One from Many*) will ever be realized in actuality, in the deeper sense, is still unclear. The noble experiment, which our founding fathers inaugurated, is still

underway. To bring it closer to reality, however, requires a reaffirmation of a basic respect for all people, considering all people of equal worth and with equal rights as granted them by their Creator, which is at the root of our national heritage. The Christian Church, and we as Christian individuals, should be on the side of and encourage those minority groups which are still struggling to attain or maintain their rightful places in our society, in keeping with our biblical heritage that consistently portrays God's concern and activity on behalf of the enslaved, the oppressed, and the victims of injustice.

As we consider the significance of this motto in its social context during this bicentennial year of our nation's history, it is also well for us to give similar consideration to the same ideal in its ecclesiastical context during this eightieth year of our Church's history. Our Church also was established as a noble experiment, in which the freedom of the individual conscience was recognized, once a basic allegiance to the Scriptures as the standard for faith and life and to Jesus Christ as Savior was affirmed. Just as the founding fathers of our nation had left the restrictive environments of their homelands for the freer atmosphere of the "new world" and rebelled when the attempt was made to force them back into an unjust, limiting, structure, so the founder of this Church rebelled against what he felt was an inflexible confinement in a denominational system, and left for the freer atmosphere of an independent ministry. Years later, his wife indicated the wide breadth of the independent fellowship he later established. She is quoted as saying, "The church which my husband formed there [in Melbourne, Australia] was one after his own pattern. He had in it the fire of the Methodists, the water of the Baptists, the stability of the Presbyterians, and the form of church government of the Congregationalists, taking that which he considered good from all" (*Leaves of Healing*, II:3:35).

It was John Alexander Dowie's aim to establish a church that was broader and more open than the narrow-minded denominations of his day, with their particular, limiting, theological perspectives. At the

"First General Conference of all Believers interested in the Organization of the Christian Catholic Church" held in Zion Tabernacle No. 2 in Chicago, on Wednesday evening, January 22, 1896, he stated: "I never had any ambition to be the originator, the head, or heart, of a petty organization that should be just one more of the innumerable divisions of Christendom. But I have felt with a great, broad, catholic sympathy which God gave me from the beginning, and which God has broadened, and widened, and deepened throughout all the years, that I wanted, if ever I should return to organized church life, to get back to its primitive conditions, where the Church would be catholic, universal, all-embracing, in embracing all who were in communion with God by repentance and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" (*Leaves of Healing*, II:17:260). So it was, that when the Christian Catholic Church was organized (80 years ago next February 22nd), its charter membership was made up of men and women with religious backgrounds reflecting the whole spectrum of Christian denominations of that day. Once again, the aim or ideal was "E Pluribus Unum", to bring about a unity composed of a variety. And once again the question may be raised: Is this a realistic ideal? Can it actually be attained? And again, we must recognize that the answer cannot yet be given, for the "experiment" is still going on — whether in the direction of, or away from, the fulfillment of the original ideal.

The problem of church unity is not a new one. It has been with us since the beginning of the Christian Church. In fact, even before the church was established, there was a problem of unity among the original group of apostles that Jesus chose. No doubt, Jesus' friends and relatives could have told Him there would be trouble and disunity if He tried to organize a following which consisted of such diverse backgrounds and perspectives. To mix a nationalistic Zealot, whose aim was to win freedom from the Roman overlords, and a publican, who collaborated with the Romans, along with simple fishermen and other men, about whom we can only imagine, was a sure recipe for agitation. It is hard to imagine how such a



divergent group could be welded into a unit.

Throughout Jesus' ministry, we find disunity evident among His apostles, because they failed to apprehend His spirit and follow His teachings and example. He tried to teach them humility, but they argued about who was the greatest and vied for the highest seats in the Kingdom. On at least two different occasions, for Jesus had to rebuke them for their narrow, exclusivistic attitude. When the report was made that the disciples had forbidden a man who was casting out demons in Jesus' name, because he didn't follow them, Jesus' words were "Forbid him not" (Mark 9:38-39). And, when the disciples rebuked those who brought their children to Jesus, in effect, interposing themselves between these little ones and their Lord, Jesus was moved with indignation and said to them, "Forbid them not" (Mark 10:13-14). In both cases, the narrow, line-drawing, exclusivism of the disciples was countermanded by their Lord, whose perspective was much broader. He spoke of "other sheep . . . not of this fold" which He would bring (John 10:16) and of the "many (that) shall come from the east and the west and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven" while the sons of the Kingdom are cast forth into outer darkness (Matt. 8:11-12).

The Early Church, likewise, had its problems with the variety of people who composed it. Jews and Greeks, Hebrews and Hellenists, circumcised and uncircumcised, legalists and liberals, those who religiously kept certain days and refused to eat certain foods, and those who considered such things of minor or no importance. There is not one church to which one of our New Testament epistles was addressed which did not have a problem relating to church unity. So, we may well ask whether it is not unrealistic to have a Christian Catholic Church, where individual particularities can be subsumed under an all-embracing, loving, unity. Is it possible for people with such a variety of backgrounds and viewpoints to find genuine mutual acceptance and spiritual oneness?

Evidently, this Church's founder thought it could be done. At that

first organizational meeting in 1896, after introducing the Church's Basis of Fellowship, he stated: "Now that is a very broad Church. I will show you, therefore, that we cannot be denominational, sectarian, or narrow. I would refuse to organize a Church which should demand that a man should think exactly as I, or you, or somebody else thinks upon a great many matters that are not essential to salvation. No matter that they might be true, we have no right to demand of our brethren absolute acquiescence in every line of our experience. It is impossible to get it, and it is not right to try for it, and we have no right to shut anybody out of fellowship who will comply with those essential conditions that I have named; for they belong to God, and are adopted by Christ, and are regenerated by the Holy Ghost, and we have no right to shut a man out because he does not follow us in all our opinions and deductions from Scripture" (*Leaves of Healing*, II: 17-267-268). This was General Overseer Dowie's ideal. Unfortunately, neither he nor his successor succeeded in bringing this high ideal into realization. In fact, it is not evident that a serious attempt was made to do so.

Under the leadership of the subsequent two General Overseers, however, the narrowness of outlook which characterized previous decades was greatly broadened and the opportunity was given for honest expression of differing viewpoints upon many matters. There are some who could not countenance such breadth of opinion or doctrinal expression, and felt duty-bound to separate and find a church home with a narrower focus, where people think alike, where special concentration is given to one particular aspect of God's truth. So, the question remains: Is the ideal of "E Pluribus Unum" (bringing unity out of plurality) realistic? As we consider the present state and future direction of our Church, the peculiar ideal of its human founder calls out for careful examination.

Is there some reason for our continued existence as a separate religious body? Are we different from the sects or denominations that are bound by their historical past? In the future, will there be any genuine difference between this Christian Catholic Church and any other

independent, conservative, narrow-minded church? Is it possible to have within our fellowship those who have had a charismatic experience and express themselves in strange tongues, those who emphasize healing by faith alone, those who consider it important to observe the Old Testament dietary laws, those who oppose smoking, drinking, theater-going, card-playing, short dresses, long hair, short sermons, and long prayers along with those who strongly and conscientiously disagree, and yet have genuine mutual respect for one another and recognize our essential oneness in our allegiance to Jesus Christ? There are matters deeper and more serious than those I have just mentioned that may divide us.

In regard to the person of Christ, Paul writes that He "was born of the seed of David according to the flesh," but "declared to be the Son of God according to the spirit of holiness" (Rom. 1:3). It is probably humanly impossible to reasonably explain the mystery implied in these words. With full Scriptural support, we may speak of Jesus, the true man, who was born in a truly human manner, grew and developed as a youth, increasing His wisdom and knowledge, who became hungry and tired, irritated, angry, sad, who was tempted, and faced the real possibility of sinning, who asked for the cup of suffering to be taken from Him. We may also speak of Christ, the Son of God, the miracle-worker, sinless, perfect, obedient unto death, one with God from the beginning of time. But churches have been split because one or the other of these Scriptural truths was emphasized or neglected. Likewise, there is a divine-human element to the Scriptures themselves. Men wrote, inspired by God. It is hard to emphasize one side without seeming to do injustice to the other. Similarly, with faith and works in regard to salvation. And so it is with many other paradoxes relating to God's truth which is finally beyond our powers of comprehension. There are people who from birth have been blessed (or cursed) with a critical, negative, disposition, who can see sin and Satan hiding behind every tree, see the world as going to hell, and view God as a wrathful Judge. Others are constitutionally blessed (or cursed)



with an optimistic, positive, disposition, that see evidences of Divine grace, even in the shadows, envision a developing Kingdom of God, and view God as a loving Father. Scriptural support may be found for both positions. Is it possible for people of strong and firm convictions, but who differ on important matters to find fellowship in the same church? I am in the Christian Catholic Church today because I believe it is, and I pray that it will continue to be so in the future.

This is not possible, however, without genuine respect for not only the person but also for the opinion or conviction of others. And true respect involves listening to others, as well as speaking ourselves. Probably the best known of Fr. Michel Quoist's *Prayers of Life* is that one titled, "The Telephone". "I have just hung up; why did he telephone? I don't know . . . Oh! I get it . . . I talked a lot and listened very little. Forgive me, Lord, it was a monologue and not a dialogue. I explained my idea and did not get his; Since I didn't listen, I learned nothing; Since I didn't listen, I didn't help; Since I didn't listen, we didn't communicate. Forgive me, Lord, for we were connected and now we are cut off." Are we

really willing to listen, attentively and sympathetically, to the views of others with whom we differ? There must be some reason that God put such variety in the world. He didn't make all plants flowers, all flowers roses, all roses red, nor all red roses alike. Each one is different. So, with the birds and bees, snowflakes and human beings. All are unique. All have something special to contribute to the symphony God would have this world produce. Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote, "Never try to make another person like yourself, for you know and I know, and God knows, that one like you is enough in the world." In the Church, we are all members, with our special gifts and abilities, of one Body, related to one Head.

Our Scripture passage (Gal. 3:23-29) refers to the bondage of men under the law and its restrictions, but now that faith is come, they are freed from such bondage. Not only does Jesus Christ free us, he unites His people. *Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye*

*are all one in Christ Jesus* (Gal. 3:26-28). Such deep and fundamental distinctions as race, class and sex, can be brought into a deeper unity in our Christian faith . . . united in Christ and a basic allegiance to Him. This is the ideal. Is it practical? Can it be achieved? Only if we believe it can and work toward its accomplishment. It's not an easy thing to bring "one out of many" but God can do it if people are willing to be changed by His Spirit and truly become His children. If our eyes are upon Christ, rather than upon one another; if we are seeking to glorify Him according to the peculiar qualities and experiences He has given us, while permitting others to do the same; if we seek to love, are willing to admit that we do not yet have all of God's truth and that those who differ from us may have at least a portion of it; and if we are willing to accept one another, as He loves and accepts us, it will be possible for this Church to perform a unique and important function in the world as a genuine Christian Catholic Church in which God brings true oneness out of many-ness. May God open our hearts, enlarge our vision, deepen our faith, and strengthen our love to bring it to pass. Amen.

## MINISTERS OF THE CHRISTIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH January 1976

### Administrative Council

Carl Q. Lee, General Overseer  
Jabez Taylor  
Earl L. Minton  
Roger W. Ottersen  
(1 Diaconate representative)

### Pastoral Ministers Assigned

(listed in order of ordination)

Carl Q. Lee	Roger W. Ottersen
Jabez Taylor	Noel Smith
Leland Barton	Bernard Reimer
Earl L. Minton	Bruce Weber
Clark B. Offner	H. Jay Warren
*G. William Mason	

### General Council

Carl Q. Lee	Roger W. Ottersen
Jabez Taylor	Noel Smith
Leland Barton	Bernard Reimer
Earl L. Minton	Samuel Harrichand
Clark B. Offner	Bruce Weber
G. William Mason	H. Jay Warren

### Eligible for General Overseer

Carl Q. Lee	G. William Mason
Jabez Taylor	Roger W. Ottersen
Leland Barton	Noel Smith
Earl L. Minton	
Clark B. Offner	

\*Under special assignment

### Parish Ministers

#### Australia

Ronald C. Jenkins  
Raymond C. Uren

#### Guyana

Samuel Harrichand  
(Field Supervisor)  
Eric Gray  
E. B. Pollard  
Reuben Macey  
J. P. Shivrattan

#### Israel

S.B.D. Nassar

### Preparatory Ministers and/or Commissioned

Arnold Studebaker, Jr.  
Dean Matteson  
Evangelio Mercado

### Retired Ministers

Stanley C. Smith (Australia)  
Gerald W. Mason (U.S.A.)  
W. T. Thane (Jamaica)  
Victor Lawrence (Guyana)  
Maximo Industan (Philippines)  
Michael Khayat (U.S.A.)

There are others who have been ordained by the Christian Catholic Church but are not assigned under our church and therefore are not listed.

#### Japan

Shozaburo Tomita

#### Philippines

Pat Neri Hermosilla  
(acting Elder-in-Charge)  
Fermin K. Dullano, Sr.

#### United Kingdom

Arthur Murton

#### United States

##### Chicago

Theodore Mason  
Navajo Reservation  
Lester Zilth